



PARALEGAL SPECIALIST

CHARACTERISTICS OF WORK:

This is administrative work of a paralegal nature providing legal interpretation and consultation and performing research and reference services. An incumbent interprets and explains laws, regulations, and procedures to staff members; reviews reports and assists in preparation of legal documents that may require the referral of cases for prosecution; is responsible for supplying legal reference services; and conducts extensive research. Work is performed under the general supervision of an administrative superior. Incumbent supervises staff members.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

These minimum qualifications have been agreed upon by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in this job class and are based upon a job analysis and the essential functions. However, if a candidate believes he/she is qualified for the job although he/she does not have the minimum qualifications set forth below, he/she may request special consideration through substitution of related education and experience, demonstrating the ability to perform the essential functions of the position. Any request to substitute related education or experience for minimum qualifications must be addressed to the State Personnel Board in writing, identifying the related education and experience which demonstrates the candidate's ability to perform all essential functions of the position.

EXPERIENCE/EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

Education:

A Bachelor's Degree from an accredited four-year college or university;

AND

Experience:

One (1) year of experience in court filings, records, and appeals.

OR

Education:

Graduation from a standard four-year high school or equivalent (GED);

AND

Experience:

Five (5) years of related experience, of which one (1) year must have been in court filings, records, and appeals.

Substitution Statements:

Graduation from a standard four-year high school or equivalent (GED), related education, and related experience may be substituted on an equal basis.

Thirty (30) semester hours from an accredited school of law may be substituted for the one (1) year of experience in court filings, records, and appeals.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

These physical requirements are not exhaustive, and additional job related physical requirements may be added to these by individual agencies on an as needed basis. Corrective devices may be used to meet physical requirements. These are typical requirements; however, reasonable accommodations may be possible.

Light Work: May frequently walk or stand and/or frequently exert force equivalent to lifting up to approximately 10 pounds and/or occasionally exert force equivalent to lifting up to approximately 20 pounds.

Vision: Requires the ability to perceive the nature of objects by the eye.

Near Acuity: Clarity of vision at 20 inches or less.

Midrange: Clarity of vision at distances of more than 20 inches and less than 20 feet.

Ability to adjust focus: Ability to adjust the eye to bring an object into sharp focus.

Speaking/Hearing: Possesses the ability to give and receive information through speaking and listening skills.

Motor Coordination: While performing the duties of this job, the incumbent is regularly required to sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects, tools, or controls; and reach with hands and arms. The incumbent is frequently required to stand; and walk. The incumbent is occasionally required to climb or balance; and stoop, kneel, crouch, or bend.

COMPETENCIES:

The following competencies describe the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes that lead to a successful employee in this position. An applicant will be expected to exhibit these competencies or the ability to reach competency achievement within a specified time. These competencies are linked to the essential functions of the job. Employees in this position may be evaluated on these competencies as part of the performance appraisal system. Example behaviors are listed below each competency and are used for illustrative purposes only. Specific behaviors may be identified and included later by the hiring agency. It is understood that some of these behaviors might not be acquired until a reasonable time after hire. Failure of an employee to successfully demonstrate some or all of these competencies, as deemed important by his or her reporting official, may result in the employee being placed on a performance improvement plan. If after a reasonable period of time, usually three (3) months, the employee fails to demonstrate successful performance, the employee may be terminated. These competencies include, but are not limited to, the following:

PUBLIC SECTOR COMPETENCIES:

Integrity and Honesty: Demonstrates a sense of responsibility and commitment to the public trust through statements and actions.

Models and demonstrates high standards of integrity, trust, openness, and respect for others. Demonstrates integrity by honoring commitments and promises. Demonstrates integrity by maintaining necessary confidentiality.

Work Ethic: Is productive, diligent, conscientious, timely, and loyal.

Conscientiously abides by the rules, regulations, and procedures governing work.

Service Orientation: Demonstrates a commitment to quality public service through statements and actions.

Seeks to understand and meets and/or exceeds the needs and expectations of customers. Treats customers with respect, responding to requests in a professional manner, even in difficult circumstances. Provides accurate and timely service. Develops positive relationships with customers.

Accountability: Accepts responsibility for actions and results.

Is productive and carries fair share of the workload. Focuses on quality and expends the necessary time and effort to achieve goals. Demonstrates loyalty to the job and the agency and is a good steward of state assets. Steadfastly persists in overcoming obstacles and pushes self for results. Maintains necessary attention to detail to achieve high-level performance. Deals effectively with pressure and recovers quickly from setbacks. Takes ownership of tasks, performance standards, and mistakes. Has knowledge of how to perform one's job. Knows the organization's mission and functions and how it fits into state government.

Self Management Skills: Effectively manages emotions and impulses and maintains a positive attitude.

Encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity; fosters commitment and team spirit; works effectively and cooperatively with others to achieve goals. Treats all people with respect, courtesy, and consideration. Communicates effectively. Remains open to new ideas and approaches. Avoids conflicts of interest. Promotes cooperation and teamwork.

Interpersonal Skills: Shows understanding, courtesy, tact, empathy, and concern to develop and maintain relationships.

Demonstrates cross cultural sensitivity and understanding. Identifies and seeks to solve problems and prevent or resolve conflict situations. Encourages others through positive reinforcement.

Communication Skills: Receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and expresses information to individuals or groups effectively.

Receives other cues such as body language in ways that are appropriate to listeners and situations. Takes into account the audience and nature of the information; listens to others, attends to nonverbal cues, and responds appropriately. May make oral presentations. Communicates ideas, suggestions, and concerns, as well as outcomes and progress throughout the process of an activity. Provides thorough and accurate information.

Self-Development: Adapts behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles.

Seeks efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills; uses training, feedback, or other opportunities for self-learning and development. Develops and enhances skills to adapt to changing organizational needs. Remains open to change and new information and ideas.

TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES:

Critical Thinking: Analyzes a problem or situation and identifies solutions based on a logical reasoning process.

Analyze a problem. Identify and evaluate alternative solutions. Formulate logical solutions to problems. Construct logical arguments in support of specific positions. Evaluate solutions and arguments. Determine which areas of law are relevant to a particular situation. Apply principles of professional ethics to specific factual situations. Identify interrelationships among cases, statutes, regulations, and other legal authorities. Apply recognized legal authority to a specific factual situation. Analyze factual situations to determine when it is appropriate to apply exceptions to general legal rules. Apply exceptions to general legal rules. Distinguish evidentiary facts from other material and/or controlling facts. Identify factual omissions and inconsistencies.

Communication: Shares information in writing and verbally.

Interact effectively, in person, by telephone and in written correspondence with lawyers, clients, witnesses, court personnel, co-workers, and other business professionals. Conduct effective interviews with clients, witnesses and experts. Exhibit tact and diplomacy; distinguish between assertive and aggressive behavior; apply assertive behavior techniques. Adapt to situations as they arise. Understand the need to ask questions and seek guidance when appropriate.

Legal Research Skills: Possesses the skills to perform the duties associated with legal research.

Prepare and carry out a legal research plan; analyze and categorize key facts in a situation. Use both print and electronic sources of law to locate applicable statutes, administrative regulations, constitutional provisions, court cases and other primary source materials. Use both print and electronic sources of law to locate treatises, law review articles, legal encyclopedias, and other secondary source materials that help explain the law. Read, evaluate and analyze both print and electronic sources of law, and apply them to issues requiring legal analysis. Properly cite both print and electronic sources of law. "Cite check" legal sources. Identify, locate and appropriately use both print and electronic resources to update and verify the reliability of cited legal authority.

Legal Writing Skills: Possesses the skills to perform the duties associated with writing and reviewing legal documents.

Understand and apply principles of writing and rules of English grammar to all writing tasks. Write in a style that conveys legal theory in a clear and concise manner. Read and apply a court opinion to a fact situation. Report legal research findings in a standard interoffice memorandum or other appropriate format. Cite print and electronic primary and secondary sources in proper form. Draft client correspondence and legal documents, using proper format and appropriate content. Locate and modify standardized forms found in formbooks, pleadings files, form files, or a computer data bank to fit a particular situation.

Computer Skills: Is proficient with computers and the software applicable to the position.

Define and identify basic computer hardware components. Identify and describe typical software and information systems typically encountered in the legal environment. Access legal and non-legal data available on the Internet; compare key word and subject-oriented search engines; evaluate Internet sites for reliability and validity of information; locate and join sites that relate to the legal assistant career. Perform computer assisted and CD-ROM legal research and Internet legal and factual research.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

Additional essential functions may be identified and included by the hiring agency. The essential functions include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Interprets laws, rules, and regulations to existing and new staff members.
2. Examines and disseminates legal documents for conducting extensive research.

EXAMPLES OF WORK:

Examples of work performed in this classification include, but are not limited to, the following:

Interprets and explains federal and state laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures to staff members.

Trains and supervises staff members in reference work techniques.

Supplies reference services upon request.

Assists in preparation and examination of legal documents affecting the agency.

Reviews reports that may include assisting in referrals of cases for prosecution.

Conducts extensive research upon request from agency..

Performs related or similar duties as required or assigned.

INTERVIEW REQUIREMENTS:

Any candidate who is called to an agency for an interview must notify the interviewing agency in writing of any reasonable accommodation needed prior to the date of the interview.